

Message Text

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ACTION MBFR-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 SS-15 NSC-10 CIAE-00 PM-09

INR-10 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01

USIA-12 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 OIC-04 AEC-11 ACDA-19 OMB-01

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P R 161537 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8878

INFO SECDEF/ WASHDC PRIORITY

MBFR CAPITALS 453

USMISSION GENEVA

USNMR/ SHAPE

USLOSACLANT

USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH

USDEL SALT TWO II

S E C R E T VIENNA 4101

GENEVA FOR DISTO; FROM US REP MBFR

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJ: MBFR: DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET REP MAY 16

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN DISCUSSION MAY 16 BETWEEN NETHERLANDS AND US REPS AND SOVIET REP KHLESTOV AT LATTER' S REQUEST, KHLESTOV INDICATED THAT HE WAS ENCOUNTERING DIFFICULTIES FROM THE ROMANIANS AND ALSO THE HUNGARIANS AND BULGARIANS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED METHOD

OF DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA BY AN INFORMAL EAST- WEST WORKING GROUP. KHLESTOV SUGGESTED THAT OCCASIONAL PLENARIES ON THE AGENDA BE HELD IN ORDER TO SATISFY THE DESIRES OF THIS GROUP FOR MORE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION. HE PROPOSED THAT WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA BEGIN ON MAY 21 INSTEAD OF MAY 18 AS PROPOSED BY THE ALLIES, RAISING THE POSSIBILITY, AS YET UNCONFIRMED, THAT THE SO-

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VIETS MAY BE DELIBERATELY SEEKING SLOW- DOWN IN TEMPO OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE TALKS. END SUMMARY.

2. SOVIET REP KHESTOV REQUESTED SESSION WITH NETHERLANDS AND US REPS ON MORNING OF MAY 16 PRIOR TO SCHEDULED PLENARY. KHESTOV REQUESTED THAT THE NEXT PLENARY, WHICH IS TO PROVIDE FORUM FOR INITIAL PRESENTATIONS OF BOTH SIDES ON AGENDA, SHOULD TAKE PLACE ON THE AFTERNOON INSTEAD OF MORNING OF MAY 17, AS THE ALLIES HAD PROPOSED. ALLIED REPS ASKED WHY THIS DELAY SHOULD BE NECESSARY. KHESTOV REPLIED THAT PREPARATIONS FOR DELIVERY OF STATEMENTS WERE NOT YET COMPLETE ON THE WARSAW PACK SIDE. ALLIED REPS QUESTIONED HOW THIS COULD BE SO IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES HAD HAD SEVERAL MONTHS TO PREPARE THEIR PRESENTATIONS ON THIS TOPIC. KHESTOV SAID HE HAD SPECIFIC REASONS FOR REQUESTING THE DELAY WHICH HE WAS NOT AT LIBERTY TO DIVULGE. HE SAID THAT INITIAL WARSAW PACK PRESENTATIONS ON THE AGENDA WOULD BE DELIVERED BY POLAND, EAST GERMANY AND ALSO BY ROMANIA, WHICH HAD INSISTED ON THE RIGHT TO ADDRESS THE GROUP ON AGENDA. HE INDICATED THAT THE POLISH PRESENTATION WOULD BE THE MAIN ONE FOR THE PACT.

3. KHESTOV THEN ASKED WHETHER IT WAS REALLY NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON THE AGENDA. THE SIZE OF THE GROUP AS NOW PROPOSED WAS NOW SO LARGE THAT IT WAS PRACTICALLY A PLENARY. WOULD IT NOT BE POSSIBLE IN ANY EVENT TO DISCUSS THE AGENDA IN PLENARY SESSIONS AND LEAVE ASIDE THE IDEA OF AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP? ALLIED REPS ASKED KHESTOV WHY HE WAS MAKING THIS PROPOSAL AT THIS TIME IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT HE HIMSELF HAD SOME TIME AGO AGREED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP. KHESTOV SAID THAT THE "MAFIA METHODS" OF THE QUADRILATERAL TALKS BETWEEN THE NETHERLANDS, US, USSR AND HUNGARY HAD SERVED THEIR PURPOSE AND ONE MIGHT HAVE TO USE THEM AGAIN. HOWEVER, MATTERS HAD NOW MOVED TO ANOTHER STAGE AND HE WAS UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESURE FROM OTHER WARSAW PACK MEMBERS WHO WOULD NOT BE PARTICIPATING IN THE WORKING GROUP TO DO ALL BUSINESS IN PLENARY SESSIONS INSTEAD. MOREOVER, HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE WERE SIMILAR PRESSURES FROM ITALY AND OTHER FLANK REPRESENTATIVES ON THE ALLIED SIDE. WHY NOT THROW THE WHOLE ISSUE INTO PLENARIES? ALLIED REPS SAID THEY WANTED TO HAVE BUSINESS- LIKE, INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF AGENDA AND DID NOT BELIEVE THAT PLENARY SESSIONS, WITH PREPARED STATEMENTS OF A RHETORICAL NATURE, WOULD BE THE BEST VEHICLE TO AID EAST AND WEST TO MOVE TOWARDS BUSINESSLIKE RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUES AT STAKE, OR TO DRAFT WHEN THIS BECAME NECESSARY.

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4. KHESTOV INDICATED THAT HE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE WITH THIS VIEW, BUT SAID THERE HAD TO BE SOME WAY OF MEETING THE PRESSURES HE HAD

DESCRIBED. COULD THERE NOT AT LEAST BE A COUPLE OF PLENARIES PER WEEK IN WHICH THERE WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE ANY FIXED AGENDA OR ANY NEED FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO MAKE STATEMENTS, BUT WHICH COULD ON THE OTHER HAND PROVIDE A POSSIBILITY FOR THOSE NOT IN THE WORKING GROUP TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS AS THE DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA DEVELOPED? ALLIES REPS SAID THEY DID NOT AT PRESENT CONSIDER IT NECESSARY TO HAVE TWO PLENARY SESSIONS WEEKLY FOR SUCH PURPOSES. THIS MIGHT CONSUME TIME WHICH COULD BE USED MORE PRODUCTIVELY OTHERWISE. KHLESTOV PROPOSED THAT THERE SHOULD BE AGREEMENT TO HOLD "AT LEAST ONE PLENARY PER WEEK." ALLIED REPS SAID THAT THEY MIGHT BE WILLING TO PROPOSE TO THEIR COLLEAGUES THAT THERE BE A SINGLE PLENARY WEEKLY TO PERMIT THOSE WHO WISHED TO EXPRESS VIEWS ON CURRENT BUSINESS TO DO SO.

5. KHLESTOV THEN SAID THAT HE WOULD PROPOSE THE FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP TAKE PLACE ON MONDAY, MAY 21. ALLIED REPS SAID THEY HAD ALREADY PROPOSED MAY 18. THERE SEEMED NO REASON FOR THE DELAY SUGGESTED BY KHLESTOV. ALLIED REPS ASKED FOR SOVIET MOTIVES IN PROPOSING THIS DELAY. ALLIED REPS SAID THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET ON MAY 19, IF THE 18 TH WERE NOT A POSSIBILITY. KHLESTOV INSISTED THAT THE EASTERN STATES WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO COMPLETE THEIR PREPARATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKING GROUP PRIOR TO THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 21. ALLIED REPS SAID THEY WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THIS TIMING, BUT STILL QUESTIONED THE NEED FOR IT. THEY SAID THAT, AT THE LEAST, WHEN THE WORKING GROUPS STARTED, THEIR SESSIONS SHOULD BE DAILY. KHLESTOV SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND THIS TO HIS COLLEAGUES.

6. FOLLOWING THE PLENARY SESSION ON MAY 16, ROMANIAN REP CONSTANTINESCU APPROACHED US REP AND SAID THAT BUCHAREST AUTHORITIES WERE HIGHLY DISPLEASED WITH THE IDEA OF AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON THE AGENDA BECAUSE THEY FELT THIS COULD EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY
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